



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

March 22, 1994

Mr. Joseph J. Holonich, Director
Repository Licensing & Quality
Assurance Project Directorate
Division of High-Level
Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material
Safety and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Holonich:

The International Programs Coordinating Group for the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Project (YMP) and Switzerland's National Cooperative for the Disposal of Radioactive Waste (NAGRA) are sponsoring a three-day workshop on the coupling of site characterization with performance assessment. The workshop will address the interface between scientific and engineering confidence and the assessment of regulatory compliance for radioactive waste repositories. The objective of this workshop is to examine the relationships between the performance (safety) assessment of repository systems, the regulatory standards, and the characterization of the natural and engineered systems.

In the words of Piet Zuidema of NAGRA, "PIs collect data that PA can't use; PA wants data PIs can't measure." This workshop is designed to address the questions: How do we know when we have a sufficient scientific understanding? How can a scientific characterization be focused on providing the appropriate context and necessary level of confidence for regulatory compliance? How can detailed analysis of site behavior be used to guide probabilistic performance assessment calculations? How can performance assessment guide site and engineering characterization?

The workshop will be held on May 18-20, 1994, at Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Invitees will include participants from major national and international high-level, intermediate-level, and transuranic waste programs. If there is sufficient interest, a tour of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad, New Mexico, will be conducted on May 17, 1994. Participants are asked to indicate their interest in participating on this tour (enclosure).

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The workshop format will consist of keynote presentations that summarize national and international experience that address the workshop objective. Each presentation will include the key components that define relationships in each project; the process used to ensure responsibility for technical defensibility and traceability from data collection through the "abstraction" process into a total systems analysis and, finally, lessons learned from implementing this process. Working groups will address common issues identified by the keynote speakers and make recommendations for coupling performance assessment and characterization activities. All workshop attendees will be asked to present their perspective on specific aspects of the key components as part of the working group interactions. Results of working group discussions and recommendations will be used to develop one or more strategies that establish information flow between site characterization and performance assessment. A proceedings document will be developed from contributions by all conference participants that will contain specific recommendations for implementing this process.

Attendance will be by invitation only. We cordially invite you to submit the names of one or two participants from your organization along with a short note that addresses the specific area of your participant's interest (enclosure). Your acceptance of this invitation and statement of interest should be faxed to Les E. Shephard of Sandia National Laboratories at (505) 848-0789.

If you have additional questions, please contact Ardyth M. Simmons at (702) 794-7998 or Robert A. Levich at (702) 794-7946.

Sincerely,



Dwight E. Shelor
Associate Director for
Systems and Compliance
Office of Civilian Radioactive
Waste Management

Enclosure:
RSVP and Statement of Interest

cc w/encl:

R. Nelson, YMPO
R. Loux, State of Nevada
W. Offutt, Nye County, NV
T. J. Hickey, Nevada Legislative Committee
D. Bechtel, Las Vegas, NV
Eureka County, NV
Lander County, Battle Mountain, NV
P. Niedzielski-Eichner, Nye County, NV
L. Bradshaw, Nye County, NV
C. Schank, Churchill County, NV
F. Mariani, White Pine County, NV
V. Poe, Mineral County, NV
J. Pitts, Lincoln County, NV
J. Hayes, Esmeralda County, NV
B. Mettam, Inyo County, CA

RSVP and STATEMENT OF INTEREST

NAME: _____

AFFILIATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

I would like to participate: YES NO

I am also interested in participating in the WIPP tour: YES NO

Additional information required for badging at SNL and for WIPP tour:

FULL NAME: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY #: _____

GENDER: _____

PLACE OF BIRTH: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

CITIZENSHIP: _____

IS VISITOR AN IMMIGRANT ALIEN (PRA)?: _____

PASSPORT #: _____

PASSPORT EXPIRATION DATE: _____

I am interested in discussing the following elements that are critical to the site characterization/performance assessment process:

PLEASE FAX TO:

L.E. Shephard
Sandia National Laboratories
Mail Stop 1333
P.O. Box 5800
Albuquerque, NM 87185-1333

FAX: (505) 848-0789

PHONE: (505) 848-0795

ENCLOSURE



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

March 17, 1994

Dr. Martin J. Steindler
Chairman
Advisory Committee on
Nuclear Waste
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Dr. Steindler:

The International Programs Coordinating Group for the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Project (YMP) and Switzerland's National Cooperative for the Disposal of Radioactive Waste (NAGRA) are sponsoring a three-day workshop on the coupling of site characterization with performance assessment. The workshop will address the interface between scientific and engineering confidence and the assessment of regulatory compliance for radioactive waste repositories. The objective of this workshop is to examine the relationships between the performance (safety) assessment of repository systems, the regulatory standards, and the characterization of the natural and engineered systems.

In the words of Piet Zuidema of NAGRA, "PIs [Principal Investigator] collect data that PA [performance assessment] can't use; PA wants data PIs can't measure." This workshop is designed to address the questions: How do we know when we have a sufficient scientific understanding? How can a scientific characterization be focused on providing the appropriate context and necessary level of confidence for regulatory compliance? How can detailed analysis of site behavior be used to guide probabilistic performance assessment calculations? How can performance assessment guide site and engineering characterization?

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Dwight E. Shelor
Associate Director for
Systems and Compliance
Office of Civilian Radioactive
Waste Management

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RSVP and Statement of Interest

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J. Holonich, NRC
R. Nelson, YMPO
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W. Offutt, Nye County, NV
T. J. Hickey, Nevada Legislative Committee
D. Bechtel, Las Vegas, NV
Eureka County, NV
Lander County, Battle Mountain, NV
P. Niedzielski-Eichner, Nye County, NV
L. Bradshaw, Nye County, NV
C. Schank, Churchill County, NV
F. Mariani, White Pine County, NV
V. Poe, Mineral County, NV
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